

## **Agrobiological Particularities of Chinese Cabbage: *Brassica rapa* L. ssp. *pekinensis* (Lour) Hanelt and *Brassica rapa* L. ssp. *chinensis* (Lour) Hanelt**

**Eniko LACZI, Alexandru Silviu APAHIDEAN, Alexandru Ioan APAHIDEAN,  
Jolan VARGA**

University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Horticulture,  
3-5 Manastur Street, Cluj-Napoca, 400372, Romania; encike85@yahoo.com

### SUMMARY

The Chinese cabbage is native in Eastern Asia. In China is cultivated approximately from the 10th century. In Europe it was taken in culture in the 18th century (Indrea *et al.*, 2007). It is consumed in large quantities in Asian countries and Asian communities from Western countries. The popularity of this vegetable is growing every day worldwide (Shelp and Shattuck, 2004). There are two different types of Chinese cabbage: *Brassica rapa* ssp *pekinensis* (synonym *Brassica campestris* var. *pekinensis*) – plants which form a rosette of leaves and an elongated head and *Brassica rapa* ssp *chinensis* (synonym *Brassica campestris* var. *chinensis*) – plants which form a rosette of leaves, the leaves have the main nerve well developed, thickened; both belongs to *Brassicaceae* (*Cruciferae*) family. (Ciofu *et al.*, 2003). Commonly used names for heading group include pe-tsai, celery cabbage, Chinese white cabbage, Peking cabbage, won bok, napa, hakusai, pao and bow sum, while the other group includes pak choi, bok choy, Chinese mustard, celery mustard, chongee, and pe-tsai (overlapping with the previous group) (Kalb and Lien-Chung Chang, 2005). Depending on the head shape, pe-tsai is divided into two types: the Wong Bok types produce a barrel-shaped head which is typically short and broad, about 20 to 25 cm in length and 15 to 20 cm in diameter while the Michihli types yield long tapering heads which may reach 38 to 46 cm in length and 10 to 15 cm in diameter (Shelp and Shattuck, 2004). Chinese cabbage is a biennial plant. It has a less developed root system compared with other vegetables from the same family. The stem is short and thick; leaves are sessile with well developed main white nerve (4-6 cm at base). Requirements for temperature are reduced, but high temperatures associated with lack of soil water favors the bolting. It has high requirements for water because plants are sensitive to water stress. It needs moderate light, in long day conditions plants are bolting. Chinese cabbage prefers well structured, fertile soils, rich in humus (Ciofu, *et al.*, 2003).

**Keywords:** Chinese cabbage, pak choi, pe-tsai, agrobiological particularities.

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